/249 cont./ There is no punishment for failure to register. The reason that people do not like to register a child that has just been born is the belief that this would bring about misfortune because it is conceived as an expression of arrogance or pride. For the same reason a newborn child is wrapped in old rags. There is no certainty that the births recorded in a year represent the correct number.

A woman by preference has her first child in the house of her parents, especially if she herself was also born there. Many children are therefore registered in a kampong where their parents no longer live and from which it again "moves" a few months after birth.

A child does not receive a name directly at birth for the same reason that a child's birth is not directly reported. All boys are referred to as Baso or Batjo, all girls as Basse or Batje. In this semianonymity the child is considered safe. Only years later does it receive a name of its own, which, however, is not recorded in the register. A certificate of birth is not submitted.

Death Registers

In the death registers that are likewise maintained by the imam for the entire adat community (around 14, 000 inhabitants), the following data are found reported in parallel columns: the name of the deceased, his sex, his age; the kampong in which he died, whether he died during the night or during the day, the date of his death, the final illness, and sometimes a few remarks concerning heirs and estate.

The reasons indicated for the death are very much those of a layman; the imam bases them upon complaints uttered during the final illness; stomach-ache, coughing, sometimes old age, are found recorded in this category. /250/

Thus, these registers must also be handled with care. Neither age nor reason for death can be regarded as reliable.